



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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June 12, 2019

State Water Resources Control Board
Attn: E. Joaquin Esquivel, Chair
PO Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

RE: Water Testing Procedures for Standing Structures in Camp Fire Area

Dear Mr. Esquivel,

At the direction of the Butte County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to request the Division of Drinking Water (DDW) immediately issue guidance to testing laboratories, residents, and businesses for testing plumbing in standing structures serviced by water systems or wells damaged by the Camp Fire. The Camp Fire is the most devastating wildfire ever to hit California, destroying over 14,000 homes and nearly 5,000 other structures. Along with homes and businesses, the fire also destroyed a tremendous amount of infrastructure, including water delivery systems.

The County continues to request that DDW collaborate with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the California EPA, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), and other appropriate agencies in the development of such guidance. The DDW, and the aforementioned agencies, maintain expertise in the area of drinking water safety, and are the best available agencies to produce such guidance for the community. The County is poised to assist with communicating the guidance to residents, businesses, and testing laboratories once issued.

The Butte County Health Officer issued a Water Quality Advisory on March 19, 2019 for residents in the burn-affected areas to heed information from water authorities indicating the possibility that contamination may be present in home plumbing systems and, therefore, residents should not rely on home water filtration systems as they may not be adequate to provide needed protection. Butte County Public Health then consistently requested State agencies work to produce guidance for residents and businesses for testing plumbing in standing structures.

The DDW indicated to the County's Chief Administrative Officer, Shari McCracken, that draft considerations for testing plumbing in standing structures were in development in coordination with other State and federal agencies. The DDW staff continually pushed out the timeline for making such considerations available to the public. Businesses operating in the Camp Fire area and residents living in standing homes, or wishing to occupy standing homes, can no longer wait. These residents and businesses need guidance now.

We ask that this matter be raised to the highest of priorities within the Division of Drinking Water and that testing guidance be issued immediately. I understand this letter may reach you after we receive the guidelines promised by the DDW staff, but it is important to send this letter on behalf of the communities.

Should you have any questions regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact Shari McCracken, Chief Administrative Officer at 530.552.3300.

Sincerely,



Steve Lambert, Chair
Butte County Board of Supervisors

cc: Members, Butte County Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Gavin Newson, Governor, State of California
The Honorable James Gallagher, Member, California State Assembly
The Honorable Jim Nielsen, Member, California State Senate
Wade Crowfoot, California Secretary for Natural Resources
Reese Crenshaw, District 21, Division of Drinking Water
Paul Yoder, Shaw/Yoder/Antwih, Inc.
Rural County Representatives of California